



DENNIS SMITH

MEANDERINGS

Ordeals failed to daunt pioneers

By Dennis Smith

22 Oct 1993

The summer of 1866 was hot in New York. Arriving immigrants were crowded onto cattle cars and shipped like cattle to Omaha, with many detours and delays. Several died from the intense heat along the way.

At Omaha, there were more delays as they waited for teamsters to arrive from Salt Lake City to help them on the long trek overland.

Having to lighten their baggage before going farther, Kristina's 5-year-old sister, Dorthea, was forced to discard the doll she had brought from Denmark, except for its porcelain head.

With only enough space in the wagons for belongings, most of the company was forced to walk all the way from Omaha to Salt Lake City. Kristina and her family were no exception.

In the evenings, after setting up camp, the exhausted immigrants would have to scout the surrounding area for buffalo chips, which they would burn for cooking fires. Their diet consisted mainly of bread, pork and beans, and, occasionally, buffalo meat.

One evening, Dorthea's dress came too close to the fire and burst into flame. Terrified, the tiny girl began running and was

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saved from certain death by a Brother Anderson, who caught her and rolled her in the dust to put out the flames. This same Brother Anderson was later the undertaker in American Fork for many years.

Footsore and weary, the immigrant company finally made it down the last few miles of the treacherous but, by now, well-worn trail through Utah's Emigration Canyon, arriving in the Salt Lake Valley on Sept. 20, exactly four months from the time their ship had departed from the harbor in Hamburg, Germany.

Kristina's family stayed in Salt Lake City for only a few days before traveling south to Lehi, where another brother of Kristina's father had been living with his family for two years under difficult circumstances.

After another two discouraging years in Lehi, they all moved to Alpine, where Kristina's father homesteaded 160 acres. Here they built a one-room adobe home with a dirt roof. Kristina's younger brother, Joseph, born shortly after the family arrived in Utah, recalled this home from his earliest memories:

"I . . . remember . . . that often in the night during rainy periods my mother and father would get out of bed, take down curtains and cover up articles of furniture to protect them from the rain and mud as it would drip through the dirt roof."

Joseph also helped his father make adobe bricks to add two more rooms to the house and to replace the dirt roof with real shingles.

In all, three Beck families moved to Alpine. They were known in town by their professions as "Farmer" Beck, "Mason" Beck and "Carpenter" Beck.

Kristina's father, Christian, was the farmer. Her Uncle Stephen, who had been the first to settle in Alpine and was overjoyed by the

eventual arrival of his brothers, often did the carpentry work on the homes after his brother Frederic had finished the masonry work. They were among the main builders of the old stone church and many of the other buildings in town.

Stephen eventually built a house with a long front porch near the entrance to town, across the creek from Kristina's father's adobe home. It had a large carpenter shop upstairs where he made cupboards, tables, chairs and the like. One of the fold-out sofa beds he made can be seen in the Daughters of Utah Pioneers' Relic Hall on Main Street.

He also made coffins whenever someone in the community died. His grandson, Stephen, relates, "My grandfather built many, many coffins and built them lovingly, for he liked his neighbors and felt a sadness in his heart when they had the misfortune to lose their loved ones."

Stephen continues, "During the last years of Grandfather Beck's life, he built a casket for himself . . . in the upstairs workshop. They said it was the very best casket he had ever built. When he had it finished he lay down in it to see if it fit. He knew he was going to die so he . . . might as well build it for himself and do a good job."

Meanwhile, across the creek, Kristina's life was just starting to bloom. Working as a cook in the mining districts at the head of American Fork Canyon, she met another Danish immigrant who had come to work in the mines — a young man named Louis Petersen from the island of Fyn. He would become my great-grandfather.

Together, he and Kristina would homestead a section of land of their own adjacent to her father's place on the outskirts of Alpine.

The log home they built by hand would become the first home of my own memory as a child.

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ing during batting practice. A line drive hit me on the hip and caused a large bruise.

Then I developed a problem in my right elbow that the doctor diagnosed as "reverse tennis elbow," caused by throwing a ball three-quarters overhand. Prescriptions and cold packs didn't do much good, but I kept going to practice anyway — a sure sign that I was losing control of my mind as well as my body.

We joined a Salt Lake County recreation softball league to get ready for the senior games, but instead of impressing our opponents with our experience, we depressed them with our inability to make throws from the outfield and hit the ball with power.

Our 2-4 record wasn't too bad, considering we played against people 20 to 30 years younger. The two teams we defeated probably still wonder how a bunch of gimpy-legged has-beens beat them. But buoyed by those two wins, we set off for fame and glory in St. George.

Our first game was against a team from Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada. One guy told us he'd already played 100 softball games this year. Wow. We'd played six. They beat us. And I pulled a muscle in my right leg running the bases. As I slowed up around third, I thought how nice it would be out on those St. George golf courses.

I played the second game at first base with my leg wrapped, and we beat a team from Detroit. In the senior games "courtesy base runners" are permitted, and I'd never seen so many of them in my life. If a hitter with a bad leg can get on base, a person without a bad leg takes over and does the running. In fact, if all the players I saw wearing Ace bandages bought them in St. George, the local economy was booming.

The next game was against a team from Salt Lake City, and we won again. I spent the time on the bench because of my bad right leg. Then in the fourth game, as I was running between third and home, I felt my left hamstring twinge.

We lost that game — which put us out of



the tournament — so I heard course on my bad legs. My so sore I could hardly lift a arm still had "reverse tennis got a sliver in my left thumb while practicing putting, a the right thumb.

Osaka if it is as dull as you say. "I feel the same way," said the frog from Osaka. "My journey up the mountain was a strain, you see, and now my legs are feeling very weak. If the sparkling streams are not so wonderful, I don't know that

The frog from Osaka agreed. "A good plan," said she. And so up they hopped, onto their hind legs. They held each other steady, and the frog from Kyoto looked one way, and the frog from Osaka looked the other.

With that the frog down the mountain homes, happy to their home was as good home and almost © 1993 Universal Pres

can cut risk of heart disease

walking or jogging a week.

Question: How can diet reduce the risk of heart disease?

Answer: The biggest factor is to decrease the amount of saturated fat you eat. This means a decrease in red meats and processed meats and avoiding full-fat dairy products like whole milk, regular cheese, ice cream and butter.

Question: Should I eat less cholesterol?

Answer: Yes. The cholesterol in foods raises your blood cholesterol, though not as much as the saturated fat in foods. Some studies suggest that cholesterol intake increases the risk of heart disease independent of its effect on blood cholesterol.

Question: Do hydrogenated oils raise cholesterol?

Answer: The "trans" fats that are formed when oils are hydrogenated (hardened) do appear to raise blood cholesterol levels,

though not as much as saturated fats do. Avoid processed or deep-fried foods like french fries, fried chicken, pies, doughnuts and cakes that contain these oils.

Question: Are monosaturated fats better than polyunsaturated fats?

Answer: Yes. Even though highly polyunsaturated oils such as safflower, sunflower, corn and soy lower cholesterol slightly, monosaturated fats like olive oil, canola oil and peanut oil are less susceptible to oxidation. And oxidized fats appear to be especially good at clogging arteries.

Question: Can fiber lower cholesterol?

Answer: Foods rich in soluble fiber appear to, at least slightly. Good sources are psyllium (Metamucil), oat bran, beans, oranges and baked potatoes with skin. Wheat bran is rich in insoluble fiber, which doesn't lower cholesterol but is good for maintaining

normal bowel fun

Question: Are glycerides danger

Answer: No o sure. But it's wor them if they are already have hear ily history of hear lesterol above 24 than 35. The most you can do: lose w heart-healthy die larly and cut back

Question: Do help prevent hear

Answer: Evid that they do — esp E. Researchers w sure, though, unt are completed in years or so. We su (400 IU) of vitam (25,000 IU) of bet 250 to 500 mg of v until the studies a remember, antiox make up for a fatt in fruits and veget ercise.

Garth Fisher is dire Performance Rese Brigham Young Un

Charity Bazaar Luncheon

Donations of candy, baked goods, "white elephants," handmade articles and other useful items are requested and should be brought to the luncheon by club

members.

Guests are invited to attend; prizes will be awarded.

Reservations must be made by Nov. 10 and cancellations by Nov. 12.

For reservation area, call Emma H 9873, or Thelma J In the Salt Lake/T Lula Jean Secrist Billie Murray at 2

SENSATION

Sparky's star is on the rise

